

Non-Technical Summary of Environmental Report for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of Selsey Neighbourhood Plan

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Non-Technical Summary summarises the findings of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of Selsey Neighbourhood Plan. The preparation of Selsey Neighbourhood Plan needed to meet obligations within EU Directive 2001/42/EC 'on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment' or the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive.
- 1.2 The SEA Directive "seeks to provide a high level of protection of the environment by integrating environmental considerations into the process of preparing plans and programmes." The SEA Directive is transposed into UK law through the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations or SEA Regulations 2004. It is these regulations that neighbourhood plans need to comply with.

2. The Strategic Environmental Assessment Process

- 2.1 The purpose of the SEA is to ensure that the environmental implications of policies within the neighbourhood plan have been assessed.
- 2.2 In accordance with the SEA Regulations, the main stages of the SEA Process are as follows:
 - Stage A: The Screening Stage – determining whether the neighbourhood plan is likely to have significant environmental effects and consulting the environmental assessment consultation bodies;**
 - Stage B: The Scoping Stage – Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope and consultation;**
 - Stage C: Main SEA of neighbourhood plan – Developing and refining alternatives and assessing effects;**
 - Stage D: Preparing the Environmental Report;**
 - Stage E: Consultation – publishing and consulting on the Environmental Report;**
 - Stage F: Post plan making reporting and monitoring.**
- 2.3 The first stage of the SEA is the screening stage whereby the local planning authority, in this case Chichester District Council, determines whether a neighbourhood plan will require SEA. The main factor in determining this is whether the plan is likely to have a significant effect on the environment. The SEA Directive makes SEA a mandatory requirement for:
 - a) Plans which are prepared for town and country planning or land use and which set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive; or
 - b) Plans which have been determined to require an assessment under the Habitats Directive.
- 2.4 In the case of Chichester Local Plan Area, some neighbourhood plans have been determined to require an appropriate assessment under the Habitats Directive. This is because they rely on mitigation measures to prevent impacts on the designated sites such as Chichester and Pagham Harbours. A judgement from the European Court of Justice in April 2018 indicated that those plans and projects

that rely on mitigation measures for designated sites should only consider the effects of mitigation through the Appropriate Assessment (AA) stage of Habitats Regulations Assessment. Neighbourhood Plans that rely on the strategic mitigation schemes in place to protect the Special Protection Areas in the District, will therefore trigger the requirement for AA. The requirement for AA means that Neighbourhood Plans will also require Strategic Environmental Assessment.

- 2.5 Since Selsey Neighbourhood Plan required Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Directive, it also required Strategic Environmental Assessment.

3. Stage B: Scoping

3.1 The second stage in the Strategic Environmental Assessment is the scoping stage which gathers information about what is happening in the neighbourhood plan area. This information informs the assessment by setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and establishing the scope of the SEA. More specifically it involves:

1. Identifying relevant policies, plans and programmes and sustainability objectives;
2. Collecting baseline information;
3. Identifying sustainability issues and problems;
4. Developing the strategic environmental assessment framework;
5. Consulting the environmental assessment consultation bodies on the scope of the strategic environmental assessment.

3.2 A framework for the strategic environmental assessment was developed during the scoping stage. This framework forms the basis against which policies within the neighbourhood plan are assessed to determine their impact on the environment and to ensure that certain objectives are met. As indicated earlier, it was the potential impact on European designated sites that triggered the need for SEA and therefore are the focus of the SEA objectives. The full SEA framework is set out in table 1.

Table 1: SEA framework for Selsey Neighbourhood Plan.

Objective	Assessment Criteria Based on Environmental Issues	Indicators
1. The integrity of Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA and Medmerry Compensatory Habitat are maintained and restored.	<p>1a) Will the policy reduce urbanisation effects on the SPA?</p> <p>1b) Will the policy prevent increases in recreational pressure on the SPA?</p> <p>1c) Will the policy improve water quality within Chichester Harbour?</p> <p>1d) Will the policy prevent the loss of functionally linked habitat?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance of proposal from the SPA (i.e. Greater than or less than 400m) • Is the proposal within 5.6km of Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA? • The results of the Water Quality Assessment for the Local Plan Review • The results of the Solent Waders and Brent Goose Study 2010 and the updated study due to be

Objective	Assessment Criteria Based on Environmental Issues	Indicators
		published in 2019.
2. The integrity of Pagham Harbour SPA is maintained and restored	2a) Will the policy prevent increases in recreational pressure on the SPA? 2b) Will the policy prevent the loss of functionally linked habitat?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the proposal within 3.5km of the SPA? • The results of the Solent Waders and Brent Goose Study 2010 and the updated study due to be published in 2019.
3. The integrity of the Solent and Dorset Coast potential Marine SPA is maintained and restored	3a) Will the policy prevent increases in recreational pressure on the potential SPA?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance from the potential SPA
4. The protected features of the Selsey Bill and The Hounds MCZ are maintained or restored	4a) Will the policy ensure those protected features which are currently in a favourable condition, are maintained in a favourable condition? 4b) Will the policy ensure those protected features which are currently in unfavourable condition are restored to a favourable condition?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance from MCZ • Natural England's Site Condition Data

4. Stage C: Main SEA of the Selsey Neighbourhood Plan

- 4.1 The SEA documents should be read in conjunction with Selsey Neighbourhood Plan which provides background information to the various policies and the precise wording of the policies (<https://www.chichester.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=29437&p=0>).
- 4.2 During the main SEA of the plan, the policies within the plan were assessed against the SEA framework above. The policies were assessed compared to a baseline without the policy.
- 4.3 Although all the policies within the plan were assessed against the framework, it is policy 004 on Temporary Agricultural Workers which specifically identifies a site for development and is given in full below:



Policy 004

Land at Home Farm is allocated for development comprising temporary accommodation for agricultural workers.

Proposals for this site should:

- Look to minimise the impact of recreational disturbance on the Medmerry realignment and Pagham Harbour.
- Ensure that the site can be returned to its original condition when the intended use has ceased.

5. Summary of Effects

- 5.1 Without mitigation, policy 004 for temporary accommodation of agricultural workers could have a negative impact on the Pagham Harbour SPA through increased recreational disturbance from those workers using the temporary accommodation. However mitigation will be provided through contributions to the Joint Pagham Harbour Mitigation Scheme which is a Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Scheme (SAMMs), details of the scheme are available at: <https://www.chichester.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=27414&p=0>.
- 5.2 The policy will not have an impact on the functionally linked habitat for the qualifying species *Branta bernicla bernicla* (Dark-bellied Brent goose) because the allocation at Home Farm is on an area of existing hardstanding which is not usable by the species.
- 5.3 The policy and allocation is outside the zone of influence of Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA and Medmerry Compensatory Habitat and therefore will not have significant negative impact on the SPA and the scale of the proposal and distance from the Solent and Dorset Coast potential SPA, means that there will be no significant impact on the potential SPA.
- 5.4 The policy and allocation is at a sufficient distance from Selsey Bill and The Hounds Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) to have no significant impact on the MCZ. There will be no impact on the condition of protected features within the MCZ.

6. Monitoring Framework

- 6.1 The monitoring framework for the SEA process is set out in the indicators column in table 1 above. The scoping process used to select these indicators is explained fully in the SEA Scoping Report dated July 2019.
- 6.2 Should this monitoring indicate that negative impacts not envisaged in this assessment are found to be occurring, then additional measures will be introduced to mitigate any negative

impacts. These impacts will also be addressed during any future review of the Neighbourhood Plan.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 A Strategic Environmental Assessment of the policies within Selsey Neighbourhood Plan has been undertaken against the SEA framework and the results are presented in an Environmental Report. Since SEA can consider mitigation measures, the assessment concluded that all the policies, including the allocation under policy 004, will not result in a significant negative impact on the environment.